# 01847

c. 1968/04/04

I wish to clarify the present status of our efforts to set up talks with the North Vietnamese government.

On April 3 the President received word of the North Vietnamese response to the offer in the President's speech of March 31.

The President promptly on that same day had a message delivered to an official of the North Vietnamese government at their embassy in Laos. We have indications that this message was received in Hanoi.

Acting on the proposal of the North Vietnamese government, we said that Ambassador Harriman would be available immediately to establish contacts with representatives of the government of North Vietnam. Geneva was proposed as the site.

The U.S. government has not yet received a formal reply from the government of North Vietnam. We have received messages through private individuals recently in Hanoi, but these do not appear to be a reply to our proposal.

We hope to receive an official reply from Hanoi soon.

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